

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Betsy Clayton, APR/CPRC
Communications Director
Lee County Government
239-533-0793
LeeCountyPIO@leegov.com

Tropical Storm Nicole update from Lee County for Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 8

Fort Myers, FL, Nov. 8, 2022 – Lee County officials today provided an update on Tropical Storm Nicole.

Here is an updated recap of today's update:

Anticipated impacts:

- The Lee County Emergency Operations Center is activated from Hurricane Ian. The county remains under a State of Local Emergency.
- Based on the latest forecasts, it's anticipated that Nicole will be a Category 1 hurricane when it makes landfall on the east coast of Florida sometime Wednesday or Thursday.
- 2 to 4 inches of rain with localized flooding is expected in Lee County.
- No widespread power outages currently are anticipated.

Sheltering:

- The county is cognizant that many residents are living in damaged homes because of Hurricane Ian or may be staying in RVs or tents on their property. The following shelter options will be available beginning at 7 a.m. Wednesday, and both are pet-friendly:
 - North Fort Myers Recreation Center, 2000 North Recreation Park Way, North Fort Myers, FL 33903.
 - Estero Recreation Center, 9200 Corkscrew Palms Blvd., Estero, FL 33928.
 - Please do not go to these locations today for sheltering, as they are being used for the election.
- Remember, these shelters are options, particularly for island residents who were previously impacted. No evacuation orders are in place at this time. These shelters are to boost safety and comfort for residents whose homes were damaged by Hurricane Ian.
- For those who need help getting to shelters, the county will activate the Emergency Transportation Plan, which uses LeeTran. People can go to any of the following designated LeeTran transfer locations beginning at 7 a.m. Wednesday for a ride to a shelter. The service is free:
 - Coconut Point Mall
 - Constitution Boulevard and U.S. 41
 - Fort Myers Beach Park & Ride
 - Sanibel Tanger Outlets
 - Edison Mall
 - Rosa Parks Transportation Center
 - Publix- Homestead Road, Lehigh Acres
 - Publix- Cape Coral North
 - Cape Coral Transfer Center

- Merchants Crossing
- If additional information is needed, call United Way's Storm Hotline at 211 for help. Or call the LeeTran Customer Service at 239-533- 8726 or LeeTran Passport Services at 239-533-0300.

Blue Roof Program:

- The county's state and federal partners have spoken about the resiliency of Blue Roofs.
- As an example, 88% of the Blue Roofs that were installed after Hurricane Laura withstood winds from Hurricane Delta (Category 1) in Louisiana in 2020.

Disaster Recovery Centers:

- In an abundance of caution, the Disaster Recovery Centers in Lee County will close while Nicole passes.
- DRCs at Fort Myers Beach and Pine Island closed effective today. The DRCs on Sanibel, Cape Coral and Lakes Regional Library will close Wednesday. All will be closed Thursday and Friday.
- Reopening decisions will be announced on the weekend.

Debris:

- Residents should monitor local meteorologists and the National Hurricane Center and pay close attention to the earliest arrival time for potential tropical-storm force gusts.
- Garbage and recycling collections will continue as regularly scheduled until tropical storm force winds are sustained.
- If storm debris is already cleared:
 - Remove anything outside your home that could become a projectile during a storm including your garbage cans, lids and recycle carts and store them inside.
- The county recognizes that residents have concerns about Hurricane Ian debris piles. For now, know that the county is working rapidly to continue debris collection today and this week.
- The county is coordinating with its debris hauler and will make a decision to temporarily halt collections at an appropriate time if necessary.
- If there is debris in front of a home:
 - Residents can take photographs of debris at their curbside prior to Nicole's arrival and again after the storm passes. This can assist the debris hauler and Solid Waste, if needed, with FEMA reimbursement.

Additional operations:

- No decisions have been made about any county office closures. The county will provide updates online and through social media as well as local media outlets.
- Lee County does not literally “close” bridges during tropical storms or hurricanes with barricades, cones, gates or signs because they can easily blow away, becoming ineffective and hazardous. Lee Department of Transportation strongly advises motorists to stay off bridges – and the roads leading to them— when tropical-storm force winds are sustained.
 - Motorists may encounter law enforcement officers during weather events around and near bridges. Follow the directions given.

Information:

- The county is committed to keeping you up to date. The county has co-located the Tropical Storm Nicole information on the Hurricane Ian website.
- More information is available at www.leegov.com/storm.
- Follow @Lee County Government on Facebook, www.facebook.com/leecountyflbocc